

REMARKS

I. INTRODUCTION

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-11 and 13 have been amended. Claim 5 has been cancelled. No new matter has been added. Thus claims 1-4 and 6-13 are pending in the present application. In view of the above amendments and following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable.

II. THE SPECIFICATION OBJECTIONS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

The Examiner objects to the length of the abstract. (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 2). Applicants respectfully submit that the abstract contains only 136 words and is compliance with MPEP § 608.01(b). Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the abstract objection.

As the Examiner has stated in the Office Action, MPEP 608.01 only provides the preferred arrangement and headings. It is not a requirement that headings be used. Thus, Applicants respectfully decline to place headings in the present application.

III. THE 35 U.S.C. § 112 REJECTIONS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 3). Claim 5 has been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitation of cancelled claim 5. Claim 1 recites "channel segments (54) for interrupting the steam flow path, which are arranged in order to open against the direction of the steam flow (SF)." Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn

IV. THE 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) REJECTIONS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claims 1-4 and 6-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,594,800 to Herrman (hereinafter "Herrman"). (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 3-4).

Claim 1 recites "[s]team conditioning device (30), comprising: at least one steam outlet (33); directing means (50) for directing a steam flow (SF) toward the at least one steam outlet (33) along a steam flow path; and vortex generating means which are arranged along the steam flow path, and which are adapted to creating local pressure differences in the steam flow (SF) in order to obtain vortices (V) in the steam flow (SF); and channel segments (54) for interrupting the steam flow path, which are arranged in order to open against the direction of the steam flow (SF)."

Claim 1 has been amended to recite the limitation of cancelled claim 5. Applicants take note that the Examiner has not rejected claim 5 as being anticipated by Herrmann. Thus, Applicants presume that Herrmann does not teach or describe the limitation of cancelled claim 5 considering the fact that the Examiner has failed to address the limitation of claim 5 with respect to Herrmann. Applicants accordingly presume Herrmann does not anticipate the subject matter of claim 5. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Herrmann and is allowable. Because claims 2-4 and 6-12 depend from, and therefore include all the limitations of claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable for at least the same reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 1-5 and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,979,089 to Bouleau et al. (hereinafter "Bouleau"). (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 4-5). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Bouleau describes an iron comprising a sole having a heating base and a plate mounted below the base, and two steam chambers of which one communicates with a first series of steam outlets in the plate via corresponding steam distribution orifices. (See Bouleau Abstract).

Bouleau neither teaches nor suggests “channel segments (54) for interrupting the steam flow path, which are arranged in order to open against the direction of the steam flow (SF)” as recited in claim 1. While the Examiner has stated that such channel segments exist in Bouleau, the Examiner has not identified a single structure within Bouleau that would meet this limitation. The Examiner has merely pointed to element 71 of Bouleau. Element 71 of Bouleau is merely a passage and there is no indication whatsoever that the passage includes a channel segment of any kind. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Bouleau. Because claims 2-4 and 6-12 depend from, and therefore include all the limitations of claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also allowable for at least the same reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 1-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,077,143 to Walker et al. (hereinafter “Walker”). (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 5-6). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Walker describes a steam iron having an interior water tank and steam generating soleplate with a loop-shaped heating element therein and steam ports in the soleplate. (See Walker Abstract).

Walker neither teaches nor suggests “channel segments (54) for interrupting the steam flow path, which are arranged in order to open against the direction of the steam flow (SF)” as recited in claim 1. While the Examiner has stated that such channel segments exist in Walker, the Examiner has not identified a single structure within Walker that would meet this limitation. The Examiner has merely pointed to element 54 of Walker. Element 54 of Walker is merely a passage and there is no indication whatsoever that the passage includes a channel segment of any kind. At most, the passage 54 includes projections 58. However, there is nothing to suggest that the projections 58 “open against the direction of the steam flow (SF)” as recited in claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Walker. Because claims 2-4 and 6-12 depend from, and therefore include all the limitations of claim 1, it is respectfully

submitted that these claims are also allowable for at least the same reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

V. THE 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTIONS SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker in view of Adlay Lesaga (hereinafter "Adlay Lesaga"). (See 07/30/2008 Office Action p. 6-7).

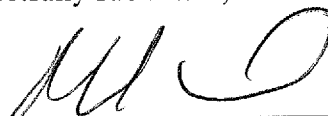
Applicants submit that Adlay Lesaga does not cure the above described deficiencies of Hermann, Bouleau and Walker with respect to claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Adlay Lesaga. Because claim 13 depends from, and therefore includes all the limitations of claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that this claim is also allowable for at least the same reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the now pending claims are in condition for allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed. An early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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